

Message Text

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ACTION INSE-00

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R 260901Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5535
INFO AMCONGEN HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

UNCLAS BANGKOK 18985

DEPARTMENT PASS INS

HONG KONG FOR INS/DIDIR/FELDMAN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF, TH
SUBJECT: TDY OF INS OFFICERS FROM WASHINGTON FOR PAROLE PROGRAM
OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEE

1. DURING EARLY AUGUST DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON BETWEEN LOWMAN AND BARNES OF STATE WITH ISENSTEIN AND BROBSON OF INS, BROBSON INDICATED THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO SEND THREE TEAMS OF TWO INS OFFICERS EACH ON TDY TO ASIA. THEY WOULD SCREEN INDOCHINESE REFUGEES UNDER THE PAROLE PROGRAM. THE FIRST TEAM WOULD BE PREPARED TO LEAVE WASHINGTON SEPT. 12 OR 19. THE AGREEMENT WAS TO AWAIT BARNES' ARRIVAL IN BANGKOK AND EVALUATION OF THE LOCAL SCENE BEFORE CHOOSING A DATE.

2. TWO FACTORS ARGUE FOR A LATER DEPARTURE DATE FROM WASHINGTON THAN ORIGINALLY SUGGESTED. THE FIRST FACTOR IS THAT BOAT CASE REFUGEES WHO MEET OUR CATEGORY CRITERIA WILL RECEIVE PRIORITY FOR MOVEMENT TO THE UNITED STATES OVER REFUGEES IN THAI INLAND CAMPS. INS HAS ALREADY SCREENED MOST OF THOSE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE, AND THE BACKLOG IS SLIGHT BECAUSE OF A DROP IN BOAT CASE ARRIVALS. BEFORE TAKING IN MORE BOAT CASE REFUGEES,
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WE WILL PAUSE TO ALLOW THIRD COUNTRIES TO ABSORB AS MANY AS POSSIBLE.

3. THE SECOND FACTOR ARGUING FOR A LATER DEPARTURE DATE IS THE PROTRACTED SCHEDULE FOR IRC PRE-SCREENING OF REFUGEES IN INLAND CAMPS. THAT PRE-SCREENING STARTS NEXT WEEK, BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE OF FOUR PLANNED IRC PRE-SCREENING TEAMS ON HAND, AND THERE

ARE 13 THAI INLAND CAMPS TO COVER. WE EXPECT TO PUT TWO MORE IRC PRESCREENING TEAMS IN THE FIELD BY MID-SEPTEMBER, AND THE LAST BY THE END OF THAT MONTH. MID-NOVEMBER IS THUS THE LIKELY DATE FOR COMPLETION OF PRE-SCREENING OF INLAND THAI CAMPS. EXCEPT FOR SOME CATEGORY I REFUGEES, WE WOULD IN THE INTEREST OF FAIRNESS, PREFER TO HAVE A PICTURE OF THE ENTIRE GROUP OF ELIGIBLES BEFORE RECOMMENDING CANDIDATES TO INS, PARTICULARLY IN CATEGORIES II AND III.

4. WHILE KUALA LUMPUR MAY HAVE DIFFERENT IDEAS FOR MALAYSIA, WE WOULD THUS ENVISION FOR THAILAND'S PURPOSES THE ARRIVAL OF ONE INS TEAM FOR TDY FROM WASHINGTON TO START WORK THE WEEK BEGINNING OCTOBER 24. THOSE TWO OFFICERS COULD THUS GET BACK HOME FOR CHRISTMAS. THE OTHER TWO TEAMS MIGHT PLAN ON ARRIVING SHORTLY AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW YEAR.

5. THE PROPOSALS IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPH ARE SUBJECT TO REVISION AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH FELDMAN UPON HIS EXPECTED ARRIVAL IN BANGKOK IN EARLY SEPTEMBER.

6. WE WELCOME EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR'S COMMENTS.

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